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Wallenberg Seen in '86, Swede's Report Says

By STEVE LOHR

Special to The New York Times

LONDON, Aug. 30 — A well-known Swedish businessman and novelist has given the Stockholm Government new evidence he says shows that Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat presumed to have disappeared in Soviet prisons after saving thousands of Jews from the Nazis, was alive as recently as 1986 and may be alive today.

The businessman, Kenne Fant, 65 years old, is a former president of Sweden's largest movie studio, Svensk Film Industri. He said he had been doing research on the Wallenberg case for six years, interviewing 63 Russian émigrés in Britain, France and the United States.

Mr. Fant said that according to a reliable informant now in the West, "an old Scandinavian diplomat" who helped save Jews in Budapest at the end of World War II was treated for frostbite on his right foot at the hospital of a large Soviet prison camp in Blagoveshchensk, near the Chinese border, on Dec. 22, 1986.

The Soviet position is that Mr. Wallenberg died of a heart attack in prison in 1947 at the age of 35. Therefore, Mr. Fant said, the person in Blagoveshchensk in 1986 would have been given another name, but it could "hardly be anybody else but Raoul Wallenberg."

Mr. Fant said he could not publicly disclose the name of the informant, since the person has relatives living in

the Soviet Union. He said he did give the names of all the Russian émigrés he interviewed to the Swedish Foreign Ministry last week.

"I Think It's Probable"

"I've become convinced that Wallenberg was alive as recently as December 1986," he said in a telephone interview from Stockholm. "And I think it's probable that he is alive."

Wollrath Tham, the Swedish Foreign Ministry official in charge of research into the Wallenberg case, said it was premature to assess the significance of Mr. Fant's information, since the documents were presented to the Government only last week. "But we're certainly going to look into it," he said.

In addition to the 1986 report, Mr. Fant said several reliable witnesses had confirmed that a man who fit Mr. Wallenberg's description was in the psychiatric hospital in Blagoveshchensk, near the prison camp in the same city, from at least February 1978 to December 1978. That report had been previously cited in a book by Abraham Shifrin and Cronid Lubarsky, two Soviet émigrés.

Mr. Fant added that Victor Davidov, a Russian émigré now living in the United States, who was in the Blagoveshchensk psychiatric hospital from 1980 to 1983, had told him that inmates at the hospital had spoken of an "old Swede," presumably Mr. Wallenberg, who had been at the hospital in 1978.

Mr. Fant is an author of seven historical novels, including one entitled "R,"

which centers on a single day in Mr. Wallenberg's life in prison.

A member of a prominent Swedish family of bankers and industrialists, Mr. Wallenberg would be 76 years old today. Sweden, which was neutral in the war, sent him to Budapest in mid-1944 at the request of the United States War Refugee Board and the World Jewish Congress to try to save Hungarian Jews from Nazi death camps. Through ingenuity and heroism, he issued Swedish working papers to 20,000 Jews and indirectly helped perhaps 100,000 others to escape.

After Soviet troops entered Budapest in January 1945, Mr. Wallenberg was placed under what was described to the Swedish Foreign Ministry a month later as Soviet protection. Although the Kremlin has never explained why it arrested him, it is assumed that it regarded him as a possible spy for the United States.

Dead, Soviets Insist

Special to The New York Times

MOSCOW, Aug. 28 — The Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman, Gennadi I. Gerasimov, replying to a question on Mr. Fant's information, repeated that Mr. Wallenberg had died years ago. "We've responded to many requests by the Swedish Government," he said today. "We studied the matter deeply, with no results. It is evident he died many, many years ago."

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